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LETTER

ON

FINANCE,

AND ON

NATIONAL DEFENCE;

ADDRESSED TO THOSE WHO ARE INCLINED TO DESPOND AT THE PRESENT POSTURE OF PUBLIC AFFAIRS.

By JOHN CHARNOCK, Junr.

——— If he be vanquiſhed,
Or make his peace, Egypt is doomed to be
A Roman province, and our plenteous harveſts
Muſt then redeem the ſcarceneſs of their ſoil.

DRYDEN'S ALL FOR LOVE.

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1798.

LETTER, &c.

IN the hour of ſo general a public alarm, and at a criſis ſo extremely intereſting, if not momentous, as the preſent, it becomes the duty of every well-diſpoſed member of ſociety to contribute his mite towards allaying the fears of thoſe who, from their peculiar habits in life and other cauſes, may be hurried into a degree of ſollicitude greater than exiſting circumſtances appear to require. Little apology therefore is neceſſary to the public for the obtruſion of this ſhort and ſimple addreſs to every cool, diſpaſſionate underſtanding. It is certainly the part of a prudent man not to deſpiſe danger, but it is the duty of every brave, of every honeſt man not to ſhrink from it.

Murmur and diſcontent having produced timidity: our inteſtine foes to peace and civil tranquility have joyfully ſeized the opportunity of encreaſing the latter by exciting the former with all the deep-mouthed thunder of diſaffection and treaſon. This attack on the feelings and paſſions of the credulous has aſſumed a variety of ſhapes according to the apparent exigence and complexion of affairs. We have rapidly advanced from the mild, the generous, the philanthropic attempt of aboliſhing the ſlave trade, through the propoſed repeal of the teſt act, and a parliamentary reform, till we have long ſince happily arrived at the grand climax of treaſonable oratory, and the walls of almoſt every petty alehouſe have re-echoed the traitorous diſcontent of ſome abandoned emiſſary to the cauſe, not merely of civil commotion, but of one, if poſſible, infinitely more wicked—the promotion of the views and hopes of a people who, after having been for ages the declared, the natural enemy of Britain, have, after annihilating every thing like order and public faith among themſelves, ſuddenly burſt forth as the determined foe of every principle under which civil

civil ſociety is regulated, and diſtinguiſhed from the moſt ſavage and unprecedented barbariſm.

The worthy champions in this renowned cauſe have of late made their grand and moſt forcible appeal to that point which has always been, and we may ſay conſtitutionally ſo, the *darling* object of fear with all Britons, the fear of poverty. Though rapacity and avarice, my Countrymen, are, I hope, by no means leading features in your national character, you will excuſe my plainneſs in telling you that you are never ſo deliciouſly miſerable as when gravely told, with all the ſolemnity of true republicaniſm, *that you are groaning under a national bankruptcy*, and though by certain, and not very honourable manœuvres, the avowal of this circumſtance may be procraſtinated for a few days, yet that it certainly muſt ſoon arrive, to the ſhame, confuſion and deſtruction, not only of the firm actually engaged in the buſineſs, but of all who are unhappily connected with it. Now I ſhall endeavour to convince you, in the plain language of Lombard-ſtreet argument, that there is not

a ſyllable of truth in this horrid, and ſo ſeriouſly inſiſted on, democratical dogma.

I ſhall begin by very gravely and *wiſely* remarking, that no man, having incurred debts to the amount of four hundred pounds, and poſſeſſing a property valued at five thouſand, can poſſibly be ſaid to be in a ſtate of inſolvency. This is exactly the financial ſtate of Great Britain at this inſtant. The permanent and immoveable property, by which I mean the land of the country, the timber growing on it, and the buildings erected on it, on the moſt accurate and moderate calculation I have been able to form, would, if progreſſively ſold, and properly recommended by the flowing oratory of Meſſieurs Skinner and Chriſtie, produce the enormous ſum of 2500,000,000: the moveable or chattel property, that is to ſay, the ſtock in the funds, the ſpecie, the plate, the jewels, the furniture, the ſtock in trade, the manufactured goods, the ſhipping, would certainly produce as great a ſum, when all the debts due from this country to perſons living in foreign countries are ſatisfied and diſcharged. Many intelligent and extremely well-

well-informed perſons, with whom I have had the honour of converſing on this ſubject, have been of opinion that this eſtimate, taken in the aggregate, is too moderate; but if it is an error, as it rather makes in favour of my propoſition, I ſhall be content to take it as ſtated. To avoid ſtill farther all poſſibility of cavil I will take off twenty *per cent.* which reduces the ſuppoſed value of the actual property of the country to four thouſand millions; out of this there are owing, principally to perſons reſident in the country, who conſequently receive with one hand and pay with the other, ſay four hundred millions, making a debt on, or deduction from, the ſaid property, amounting exactly to ten *per cent.*

The following argument may probably be fallaciouſly objected to me, as I have frequently heard it uſed in political converſation by thoſe who are fond of repreſenting public affairs in their worſt light. "It is ridiculous," ſay they, "to eſtimate the wealth of the country by the ſuppoſed extended poſſeſſions of individuals. Can you ſay that a man, whoſe landed property if ſold might probably yield one hundred thouſand pounds, can be

"ſaid

" ſaid to be worth that ſum if there is a mortgage on that property to the amount of ſeventy-five thouſand? It is no proof at all that a perſon is rich becauſe he is ſo in the world's conceit. A foreigner paſſing along the Strand, Cheapſide, as well as many other public ſtreets in London, might imagine, on ſeeing the enormous property diſplayed in the ſhops, that the metropolis was peopled by an hoſt of perſons, ſelected with care from different countries, as the congregate body of the wealthieſt merchants in the univerſe. Enter their ſhops, examine their books, and you will find, alas! that their riches are imaginary and viſionary; you will diſcover many of them little removed from a ſtate of inſolvency, ſome abſolutely plunged into it, and the greater part of the remainder, who have been more induſtrious and fortunate, ſcantily furniſhing the means of ſubſiſtence to themſelves and a numerous family, by the narrow allowance of profit on commodities in which they have in fact no property, but which are entruſted to them, as ſervants, or brokers for ſale, by more wealthy perſons, who, for a variety of reaſons, do not chuſe to take an

active

active part themſelves. They will conclude by deſiring you to minute down in your pocket book the names of thoſe, in the different ranks of gentlemen and tradeſmen whom you reaſonably may ſuppoſe to be in a ſtate of affluence, and they will aſk you whether you are not perpetually meeting with ſome of them in the deplorable condition they have deſcribed, either in advertiſements for the ſale of their property in the public newſpapers, or that lamentable liſt of bankrupts publiſhed officially twice a week, both of which afford a ſtriking, an incontrovertible proof of the profligacy, of the extravagance of the times, and the little confidence that is to be given to what is called public appearance."

This is all very true, but not at all to the purpoſe. It is extremely irkſome to be compelled to the trouble of anſwering arguments which do not bear at all on the point, merely becauſe paſſing them over may be ſuppoſed to proceed from a tacit acquieſcence in their propriety. All that theſe worthy gentlemen have advanced is, according to a quaint and comical term, mere moonſhine.

Whether

Whether property is in the hands of A. or B. whether it actually remains with the apparent poſſeſſor, or is divided and ſubdivided into five hundred parcels, is of no conſequence; it is no abridgement of the exiſtence of that property which ſtill remains with ſome perſon reſident in the country, and conſequently forms a part of its poſſeſſions. All ſecurity on *bonâ fide* property, whether real or perſonal, cannot leſſen the property itſelf: it certainly only transfers it from the right hand to the left, ſo long as there exiſts no right of removing either ſuch a part of the property ſo mortgaged, or its produce in ſpecie, into a foreign country.

I ſhall next beg leave to meet another argument, notwithſtanding it is, if poſſible, ſtill more ridiculous than the former. "You value the property of Great Britain," ſay the ſame grumblers, "in a broad ſum of four thouſand millions. The property, the value of the property, is only to be eſtimated at what it will actually produce in ſpecie; every thing ſhort of that, is merely nominal. The ſpecie of all Europe, were it four times as rich as it is, would not ſuffice

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to make good the payment: and as ſpecie decreaſes, the depreciation of property naturally takes place as cauſe and effect, ſo that in the event of the ſale, which is a viſionary propoſal, it is ſtrongly to be inferred that it would not produce a fifth part of the ſum it has been eſtimated at."

To this I anſwer, that the idea of intrinſic value is intrinſic nonſenſe; that of ſpecie itſelf as much depends on exiſting circumſtances, on the whim and caprice of the world, as that of a bank note. The only difference in advantage of the former is, that it is capable of a general circulation, the latter merely of a national one; that the former is leſs liable to injury, from the depredation of time and natural wear, than the latter. Diamonds were ſome years ſince ſuppoſed to poſſeſs this *intrinſic* value; that is to ſay, a value which ſeldom varies; and if any extraordinary accident ſhould cauſe a fluctuation, that it would be at moſt ſo trivial as not to be worth the mention, ſo that like water it may eaſily and ſpeedily be carried to nearly the ſame height as that of the original ſpring. For the truth or fallacy of this aſſertion I appeal, firſt, to the perſonal experience

of many diſtinguiſhed perſonages who have experimentally aſcertained the truth of this fact; and, ſecondly, to all thoſe who have latterly, in the way of their buſineſs, been converſant with it.

Intrinſic value is the quantity of any neceſſary of life which a coin of a particular deſignation, or a ſlip of paper ſtamped according to a known form, and held in common acceptation of the ſame value, will produce. If in the year 1788 a coin, called a ſhilling, would purchaſe three pounds of beef, and in 1798 it will only pay for one pound and an half, it may either be the conſequence of the depreciation of the ſhilling, or of the ſcarcity of the commodity itſelf. A Swediſh financier, nearly a century ago, contrived, in a ſcarcity of ſpecie, a temporary ſupply or ſubſtitute for its deficiency, by circulatng pieces of ſtamped leather, to each of which was authoritatively annexed a ſuppoſed value, according to the ſize and form of the impreſſion. The idea was juſt and patriotic; and, if the baron had been an honeſt man, he would have died with the reputation of having

having been one of the ableſt miniſters who ever exiſted, after fairly acquiring, in addition to it, the higheſt character attainable by man for public as well as private honeſty. He was not, however, proof againſt the temptation; the hope of private emolument proved too ſtrong for the frailty of his nature, and his life atoned for the injudicious, the too liberal uſe of his newly-invented coinage. Little doubt can, nevertheleſs, be entertained, but that the meaſure would have proved extremely beneficial and ſalutary to his country, had it been carried into execution with an honeſt prudence. So that this tranſaction, even in the limited extent to which it was carried, ſufficiently proves how ridiculous is the idea that, without an intrinſic value, no circulation, of what is called money, can take place with effect.

If the king, lords and commons of Great Britain, in parliament aſſembled, were to enact, that what is now called a guinea ſhould, on being carried to the mint, and after receiving a certain ſtamp, acquire the value of five, it might open a dangerous door to iniquitous ingenuity; it might cauſe the erection of

many private mints, and create much labour to the judge and executioner; but the operation of ſuch an act would not be injurious to the country in general, particularly after the expiration of the ſhort-lived wonder and aſtoniſhment a meaſure ſo unexpected would probably occaſion; ſo that, to ſum up the whole in few words, the intrinſic value, as it is called, of an ounce of gold or ſilver may be doubled, tripled, or encreaſed to any amount, by its apparent ſcarcity, or depreciated in an equal ratio by its actual or ſuppoſed abundance.

An author of conſequence and character has, a very ſhort time ſince, put forth the following whimſical idea; that, in caſe of an extermination of real liberty, and the deſtruction of that political quiet in Europe which the rapid ſucceſſes of the French banditti appear, according to the opinion of ſome timid perſons, to threaten, he would propoſe the emigration of the whole Britiſh nation to ſome foreign climate, congenial to their natural habit of body and general purſuits in life: he gravely offers, if I miſtake not, a part of China, as well adapted to an adventure of this kind: I will therefore take

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the liberty, as well as himſelf, to ſtep for a few moments out of the regions of common and plain ſenſe into the viſionary diſtricts of ſpeculative romance: I will ſuppoſe the whole property of Great Britain, real and perſonal, of what kind or nature ſoever it may be, conſigned to the fraternity of the hammer at Garraway's or in Pall Mall; and as in that caſe bidders certainly could not be found in the iſland itſelf, let me magically waft the people of China hither to ſupply their place. I will venture to aſſert that, waving the legal deductions of commiſſion, the proceeds of the ſale, if proper juſtice was done to the employers' property, would amount at leaſt to what I have before ſtated, —five thouſand millions.

But finally to quit this field of ridicule, and aſſume a more ſerious mode of argument better ſuited to ſo weighty and important a ſubject. Taking, as we have premiſed, the general national property at four thouſand millions, and the debt on it at four hundred, there needs no great ſkill in arithmetic to prove, to the underſtanding of the moſt incredulous, that a fair contribution

tion of ten *per cent.* out of all property, would diſpell that immenſe incubus which hourly ſpreads its terrific influence, diſtracts us even in ideal dreams, enervates every faculty of the national mind, and prevents alſo the natural exertions of the body. Can Britain then be ſaid to be in a ſtate of bankruptcy? Let us ſuppoſe for a moment that the legiſlative power was *tyrannical* enough—if nothing ſhort of that hard term will pleaſe the *ſoi diſant* friends of liberty—to impoſe a tax amounting to one-tenth on all real and perſonal property, to be fairly and rigidly levied: let the people of this oppreſſed, this injured country, groaning in the ſpirit under their ſevere afflictions, exclaim againſt their deſpotic rulers; let them appeal to every nation in the univerſe, and to every reſtleſs partizan of what is whimſically called freedom in thoſe nations. Let the ableſt republican lawgiver in the world, being compelled to confine himſelf ſtrictly to the queſtion and to facts, plead their cauſe and enforce their wrongs with all the energy ſophiſtry can contrive: What muſt be the ſolemn verdict of this tremendous jury?

Will

Will it deign a deciſion? Will it not ſay the queſtion is beneath them? Will it not put an end to the proceedings at once, by aſking, in plain and ſimple terms, "Will you, the people of England, the advocates for freedom; you, who have ſo long arrogated to yourſelves the character and title of the ſupporters of liberty againſt the tyranny of princes, apply to us for advice, aſſiſtance, or interference againſt what?—an impoſt forſooth, amounting to one-tenth of what you poſſeſs, which impoſt, according to your own ſhowing, will, in an inſtant, relieve you from all thoſe difficulties of which you ſo much complain, will place you once more, in the proud condition, according to your own boaſt, of awing the world? Go; your patriotiſm is falſe; your pretended love of your country abſurd: you are infected with a national avarice which palſies all your efforts, and renders you deſpicable and ridiculous in the eyes of thoſe to whom you now appeal."

Deſperate, however, as ſome perſons are fond of repreſenting the affairs of Great Britain, they do not by any means require even this effort to place them once more

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in proſperity. If the people were unanimouſly to lend one-tenth part of what they individually poſſeſs, clear of their debts, for twenty years without intereſt, and then to be repaid, it would diſcharge the whole of that ſuppoſed incumbrance under which they are ſaid to labour. Let us examine how this meaſure might be carried into execution. Let the loan be paid in by inſtalments, allowing three years for the whole. For, paradoxical and untrue as it may be thought by ſome, I will venture to aſſert, that, if the whole funded debt of this country were extinguiſhed at one inſtant, and of courſe all taxes impoſed for the payment of the intereſt of that debt ceaſed, as if by enchantment, the nation in ſuch caſe would inevitably be thrown into greater confuſion, though of a different, probably not of a leſs deſtructive nature, than it would be, were the preſent incumbrances and impoſts tripled. Taxation has through long uſe become a part of our ſyſtem; it is interwoven with our nature as a nation, and contributes to our ſtability, our political health,—our life;—in the ſame manner as a chronic complaint frequently becomes

comes the preſervative of life in old age. Taxation to this country acts on its conſtitution in the ſame manner as intenſe froſt does on the human frame: if a man be long expoſed to it, and his extremities become benumbed, ſo that a ſenſeleſs torpidity pervades his whole ſyſtem, the miſerable object, if found in time, and proper progreſſive meaſures are uſed to accompliſh his gradual recovery, his life, his health, his original faculty of motion, may ſoon be reſtored without danger to his conſtitution; but let a perſon in that torpid ſtate be taken from his icy bed and ſuddenly placed, as the quickeſt means of recovering him, before a great fire, death, if I may truſt common report, and accompanied by the ſevereſt tortures, would inevitably enſue. Exactly analogous to the two foregoing caſes would be the gradual or ſudden ceſſation of taxes on the conſtitution of Great Britain.

It may be objected to me that many unavoidable obſtacles might take place to the raiſing even ten *per cent.* on property, either in ſpecie or bank-paper; that the landholder could not convert even his acres

into gold at a time when every perſon was wanting to effect the ſame purpoſe: the merchant might uſe the ſame argument with reſpect to the commodities in his warehouſes. This is certainly all very true, but the difficulty ſhall vaniſh like a viſion on our near approach. It would not be neceſſary or even politic to make a larger demand on the lender to the public than three and one-half *per cent.* during the firſt year, two and one-half in the ſecond and third, and one and an half in the fourth. Theſe inſtalments would certainly create no great difficulty to patriotiſm, eſpecially when that patriotiſm was ſo ſoon to experience the benefit of exoneration from ſuch taxes as, and it cannot be denied that ſome are, grievouſly felt by the ſubject, and for this reaſon,—they are partially felt.

But there is another eaſy method of overcoming this objection to the poſſibility of generally raiſing the ſum required to be lent, admitting it to exiſt in its fulleſt extent. Let there be a coinage of exchequer bills to the amount of ten millions, which government ſhall advance for a given time in the proportion of one-

one-twentieth of the property poſſeſſed by each applicant: theſe will in due proceſs of time extinguiſh themſelves, and, if wanted, by creating a larger increaſe of the circulating medium, will effectually remedy the apprehended want. The apparent and ſuppoſed wealth of a nation depends on the very ſuperficial and really trivial circumſtance, of the quantity of ſpecie, or what paſſes for ſpecie, which is current in it. Thus, a people poſſeſſing a dead property amounting to one hundred millions, and a circulation of five millions in ſpecie, will be in general eſtimation much richer than one poſſeſſing a property of two hundred millions; and having ſpecie in circulation only to the amount of two millions and an half. The principle will, on the leaſt ſerious conſideration, appear ſo obviouſly true as to render any farther diſcuſſion almoſt unneceſſary. The quantum of deficiency of ſpecie, or it's ſubſtitutes, in this country has of late, through neceſſity, been experimentally proved, and aſcertained with a degree of nicety, which will, if ſeriouſly attended to, place our ſituation in the public opinion, with reſpect to wealth,

much higher than, perhaps, it is commonly eſtimated at.

We muſt now again have recourſe to the aid of a little arithmetical ſtatement. The commerce of Great Britain at the time of the revolution hardly deſerved a name, eſpecially when compared with that enormous extent to which it has of late years been encreaſed. The quantity of ſpecie in circulation, not augmenting in the ſame ratio, the whole ſyſtem would have been thrown into confuſion, and muſt inevitably have ſtood at one point, many many years ſince, had it not been ingeniouſly contrived to ſupply the deficiency by the introduction of what is called paper credit. This artificial ſubſtitute for ſpecie commenced with the bank, and from thence has deſcended, through the different ranks of private commerce, till you will now occaſionally find the paper undertaking of the meaneſt ſhop-keeper paſſing, current as caſh, into the hands of the wealthieſt merchant. It cannot, however, but be eaſily foreſeen that this contrivance, ſuggeſted at firſt by neceſſity, is liable to a number of abuſes, ſo that, if not duly checked, and kept within

proper

proper bounds, the innocent and induſtrious may frequently fall a prey to the deſigning, and the thoughtleſs. With our utmoſt care accidents of this kind will too frequently happen; but, nevertheleſs, theſe partial evils muſt unavoidably be forgotten and give way to the general neceſſity. It is in the recollection of all, that at the beginning of the year 1793, a period additionally memorable on account of the commencement of our preſent conteſt with French anarchiſts, the immenſity of paper credit had induced not merely the jealouſy, but had rouſed the prudent caution of the bank of England. The directors came to a reſolution of ſuddenly ſtopping thoſe diſcounts which, previous to that time, they were in the habit of affording to all applicants, almoſt without limitation, whoſe paper appeared to carry on its face the ſmalleſt evidence of a fair mercantile tranſaction. The confuſion created in the commercial world by this ſudden and unforeſeen reſolution, cauſed a paroxyſm of fear, mingled with diſtruſt, which rendered motionleſs, for a time, that free intercourſe in trade which has long ſince become the ſupport of the

country

country in all difficulties requiring the aſſiſtance of money. The alarm was general; the ſuppoſed want immenſe. To relieve it, the miniſter, who, as it afterwards appeared, was better informed of its extent than was generally admitted, propoſed to iſſue five millions of exchequer bills as a loan, repayable, at a given period, by thoſe whoſe neceſſities required ſupport, but whoſe ſtability ſhould, on proper examination, appear to entitle them to it. The propoſed accommodation was ridiculed: the miniſter and his adherents were treated with an affected ſcorn by the million: their ignorance, their incapacity were trumpeted forth in the loudeſt language of ſedition; and it was wiſely prognoſticated by thoſe, who on this occaſion boaſted to profeſs themſelves friends to their country, that the commercial ſun of Britain was ſet—never to riſe again.

Mark, however, the effect of this *poor*, this *pitiful* relief. The advance of this *fictitious* loan, which was gravely pronounced by the *well-informed* ſcarcely adequate to a tythe of the neceſſity, proved infinitely ſuperior to it; The commerce of the country inſtantly, as by a magic

a magic touch, acquired new vigour: confidence, regularity, ſpirit of enterprize immediately reſumed their ſeat; and the returns of the public revenue ſtand as an incontrovertible proof how ſuddenly and completely this extenſive alarm ſubſided.

Let it be borne in mind, that in that hour of general diſmay and apprehenſion, when the credit of private bills was reduced almoſt to nothing; when thoſe more enlarged, (and, conſequently, in common acceptation, more ſtable) communities formed for the iſſue of paper money, which in all parts of the kingdom ſhould bear a fixed and determinate value, were ſtopping payment in all directions, ſo that their promiſſory notes were ſunk to almoſt as little value as they were originally charged in the ſtationer's bill, the bountiful loan of a ream or two of paper, ſtamped and impreſſed according to a form preſcribed by the legiſlative power, effectually removed not only the general terror, but the want itſelf, and that too without calling on the printing-preſs to fullfil the work in the extent originally and legally preſcribed to it.

A ſecond

A ſecond and much more recent example took place early in the year 1797. The bank for very prudential reaſons, in conjunction with government, thought proper to put a ſtop to their iſſue of ſpecie in payment of their own notes. Individuals followed their example, and, for a ſhort time, a private perſon, not in trade, poſſeſſing one hundred guineas in ſpecie, might have been conſidered as a meteor for the people to gaze at. The copper-plate preſs was ſet to work; an additional circulation of bank notes, for ſmall ſums, took place, and to an amount trivial beyond conception when compared with the ſuppoſed want. Theſe were at firſt regarded with a ſuſpicious eye by the uninformed; they were affectedly called by the ſeditious, *aſſignats*; ſome few had the inſolence to refuſe receiving them in immediate payment for their goods. But the tumult was extremely ſhort-lived; and the terrors of that moment have left no impreſſion at the preſent, except it be of ſhame for a ridiculous timidity.

Thus have we ſeen in the two preceding and forcible inſtances, and it is a maxim that will hold good to the end of time, how ſmall

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an object will create a universal terror. We may remember too, that almost as recently as the event last-mentioned, we were generally impressed with all the horrors of an impending famine: we were told from the first authorities that nothing short of the greatest exertions could preserve us from it. This mania of terror extended beyond this country; all Europe, a part of Asia, as well as Africa, together with half America, felt its influence and took advantage of the ideal distress. Those who pretended to be best informed on the subject were credulous enough to suppose, that without a supply, which it was almost impossible to procure in the extent expected, the most horrid consequences must ensue. The price of corn was unprecedented, but mark the event. The importation of 875,000 quarters of wheat, readily procured in consequence of a trivial bounty given to the importers, not only removed the evil, but actually reduced the price of wheat lower than it had been even before the appearance of serious alarm.

The fact is, that the apprehension of public danger and difficulty is most easily raised; but it is in general quickly found

to be mere apprehenſion. The public mind may well be compared to a river, the ſtream of which, when unoppoſed, flows on without noiſe, and creates no alarm. Cut down a ſingle tree which grows on its banks, and plunge it partially into the ſtream, the noiſe created by the trivial impediment it occaſions is heard even at a diſtance, and may cauſe a momentary apprehenſion in the timorous. Public neceſſities never can in the ordinary courſe of events riſe to an height really awful, becauſe the terror of what may happen, which always precedes for a conſiderable length of time the neceſſity itſelf, rouſes an early attention to its prevention, or removal. Means and wants put in oppoſite ſcales generally preſerve nearly an equilibrium: if the latter preponderate in the ſmalleſt degree, the inclination is quickly diſcerned, and the ſmalleſt aſſiſtance given on the oppoſite ſide cauſes the ſcale to ſtrike the ground with a force which the ignorant beholders ſcarcely know how to credit as real.

Having thus humbly endeavoured to ſhew what might be done*, and without difficulty, in

* A gift or loan of ten *per cent.* would, of courſe, annihilate at a ſtroke, either for a time or in perpetuity, forty millions

in caſe of emergency, I ſhall now beg leave to aſſert that even theſe exertions are not neceſſary for the purpoſe of affording very ſubſtantial relief. A gift of five *per cent.* would prove adequate to the immediate neceſſities of the nation, and it may not improbably be found, on a cloſer inveſtigation, even a loan of that ſum. Grievous as our taxes are repreſented, and it muſt be confeſſed partiality has in ſome inſtances cauſed juſt grounds for complaint, there ſtill remain a number of reſources, a variety of objects for fair and equitable taxation, which miniſters either have, in the hurry of public affairs, overlooked, or, from ſome ill-founded reaſon, have been afraid to adopt. The taxes paid by a country, however numerous and extenſive they may be, ſignify very little to that country, provided certain indiſpenſible points are attended to in their invention, and principle of action. I ſhall endeavour to elucidate this, and deſcribe the principle. It is, as a firſt point, requiſite that a tax ſhould bear, proportionately at leaſt,

millions of the funded property. So far there would be no neceſſity for an advance of exchequer bills.

as heavily on thoſe who are in the moſt affluent circumſtances as upon perſons who are not ſo wealthy, for nothing can be more ſelf-evident than that, on every principle of political equity, a man poſſeſſed of ten thouſand pounds a year, can better afford to pay one thouſand to the public neceſſities of the ſtate in which he lives, than a perſon who has only one thouſand can pay fifty pounds. This ſtate doctrine has been very laudably attended to, and with the greateſt care in that moſt heavy and unprecedented tax which the ſuppoſed calamitous ſtate of the nation, with reſpect to finances, has, in the eyes of miniſters, rendered neceſſary in the preſent year.

Taxes ſhould not be open to evaſion; for nothing can be more politically improper, unjuſt, and unfair, than that A ſhould be compelled to pay his full quota, and that B, through his ingenuity, or ſomething worſe, ſhould not pay half. They ſhould be collectible with little expence; be ſo clearly defined as to leave no doubt as to the true ſum demandible from each individual; and ſhould, if I may be allowed the term, be endued

endued with an elaſtic power, ſo that they might, according to particular circumſtances, be capable of being either compreſſed, or extended. Such, however, is the nature of our preſent impoſts—ſuch the jealouſy we entertain for what we call our freedom—that none of them poſſeſs theſe principles; nor is it poſſible, perhaps, without violence to our national prejudices to introduce them.

Curſorily turning over in our minds thoſe impoſts which come under the denomination of taxes, that on windows appears to approach neareſt to perfection in the ſeveral points I have ſtated, but is ſtill remarkably deficient, and, in many inſtances, extremely partial. For inſtance, the occupier of an houſe built ſixty or ſeventy years ſince will, in all probability, have to pay the tax for three-ſcore windows, while the holder of a manſion twice its ſize, erected within theſe ten years, will, through the happy evaſive invention of his architect, not be chargeable with more than thirty. This is one of the caſes, and a ſtronger need not be adduced, of the neceſſity of that elaſtic principle we have juſt pointed out. Of all modes practiſed for the

purpoſe

purpoſe of collecting money from the ſubject, ſtamp-duties appear the leaſt objectionable; but unfortunately they are inapplicable, except in very few inſtances.

The general ſpirit of evaſion which has in this country pervaded all ranks and conditions of men, has created an infinity of trouble to the financier. Subſtitutes for deficiencies have riſen on ſubſtitutes, and centages on centages, heaping additional vexation, and creating an increaſe of murmur, in thoſe who were either too patriotic to attempt, or not ſucceſsful enough to contrive, evaſion. All this has been done without ſupplying the want or remedying the evil. On the other hand, while the law has in the foregoing caſe graſped with its iron hand more than the fabricator of it ever intended it ſhould, there are many by whom thoſe impoſts have been ſcarcely, or, at leaſt, very lightly felt. There are *many*, let me repeat the word, who have had the arrogance to ridicule the abilities of the miniſter, to call him preſumptuous in ſuppoſing he could fabricate any tax whatever which they could not, at leaſt partially, evade. For the truth of this aſſertion I will venture to

to appeal to the perſonal knowledge of the miniſter himſelf, and to the conſciences of thoſe *great* thoſe *wealthy*, thoſe *ingenious* perſons who feel that their conduct, in this hour of ſuppoſed diſtreſs, has deſervedly ſubjected them to this cenſure.

It may appear ſomewhat paradoxical to aſſert, what certainly is a fact, that, as I have already declared, it is of little conſequence to a country to what extent taxation is carried, provided the neceſſary points are obſerved. There is only one grand principal to be obſerved, whether the ſum to be raiſed be one or one hundred millions—it is an applied attention that the quantum of circulating medium ſhall always keep due pace with the ſtate neceſſity. To explain this aſſertion in direct terms; let us ſuppoſe the income of any given diſtrict, amounts to twenty millions annually, and that it is compelled to raiſe for the uſual maintenance of its independence, or whatever other public cauſe may be aſſigned, five hundred thouſand pounds, but from ſome unexpected revolution in the political world, that ſum muſt be unavoidably augmented to one

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or even two millions*; what I mean to aſſert is, that the different commodities, the growth of that country; the price of labour in it; the rent of land, and of houſes; in ſhort, the expence of living in that country, taking all points ſeparately or jointly, will all bear an equal increaſe to that of the ſum to be levied: the rent of land is augmented from ten to thirty ſhillings *per* acre; the rate of labour from one ſhilling to three *per* day; and the price of all commodities, the produce of the country, experience an augmentation according to the ſame ſcale†. This is a fact, firm, abſolute, and uncontrovertible: I can boldly challenge the united wiſdom of republicaniſm to attempt its diſproval, and ſhall reſt extremely certain of being able, in twenty lines, and on the moſt poſitive evidence, to

* In which caſe the quantum of ſpecie, or its ſubſtitute, to make every commercial or monied intercourſe as eaſy as it originally was, muſt be encreaſed fourfold; in any caſe, however, the country retains exactly the ſame portion of wealth and property it did in the firſt inſtance.

† Conſequently if the inhabitants, according to their different ranks, have to pay more, ſo have they alſo to receive more. A circumſtance which places them exactly in their original ſtate.

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fully anſwer any thing that may be advanced in the attempt to controvert it.

I believe I am not extravagant in ſuppoſing, nay, in ſeriouſly aſſerting, that without having recourſe to any farther object of taxation (though I muſt ever ſtrenuouſly maintain there are many which preſent themſelves as much fairer points than thoſe which have been already ſelected) the impoſts of the preſent day are not only more than adequate to the exigencies of the ſtate, but would furniſh triple their preſent receipt to the king's exchequer, were it not for thoſe evaſions which I have but ſlightly, and, in very few particulars, hinted at, or were the mode of aſſeſſment as well as collection, which is at preſent uſed, materially altered. There are few perſons who, on being aſked the queſtion, will not moſt forcibly aſſert, and be extremely angry if you appear to doubt their veracity, that they annually pay, taking in every branch of taxation, primary and ſecondary, twenty *per cent.* on what they poſſeſs. For my own part I am ſo well convinced either of the fallacy of this calculation, or of the incredible loſſes ſuſtained by the revenue, or perhaps both, that even under the preſſure of the preſent, and moſt ex-

penſive war Britain ever was engaged in, under that accumulated load of debt daily thundered in our ears as an inſurmountable misfortune, I ſhould think myſelf certain of poſſeſſing in ten years the largeſt property any ſubject of the univerſe ever collected, if after repealing any tax and duty whatever payed by the people of Great Britain, I had the contract for ſupplying the exigencies and expenditure of the ſtate, from a power veſted in me of collecting an impoſt of one *per cent.* on the amount of all property which each individual ſhall poſſeſs clear of his debts. The fact is, that I am certain, far as any calculation can bear me out in the opinion, that it would not, with proper œconomy uſed in the diſburſements, and diligence in the collection, require more for the purpoſes juſt ſtated than three-fourths *per cent.* Who then is there baſe enough, or bold enough, in this hour of apprehenſion, in this hour when the ſpirit of treaſon, rectified and raiſed to an alcohol in the traitorous breaſts of ſome individuals, is ſtriving for vent to inflame and conſume the country, who is there who will endeavour to encourage and fan that flame by the untrue, the traitorous declaration, that Great Britain is in a ſtate of political bankruptcy? I ſhall

I ſhall, before I diſmiſs this ſubject, add a few words relative to what is called the Loyalty Loan; the terms in which I ſhall do it may convince my countrymen, I am neither the partiſan, nor the friend of the miniſter. He certainly on that occaſion, either through inadvertency, or for ſome reaſon I cannot pretend to divine, ſuffered a ſignal opportunity to paſs him, which, well improved, would have enabled him to ſupply, not only the preſent, but the future exigencies of the ſtate on much more advantageous terms than he can now expect, or hope for. If, inſtead of cramping the loyalty of the people, and confining the ſubſcription to eighteen millions, which in the end proved in no degree equal to his wants for the ſervice of the current year, he had called on the houſe of commons to appoint a ſecret committee of finance, formed indiſcriminately of men poſſeſſing ſolidity and national conſequence with all parties; if he had inveſted this committee with the controul and ſuperintendance of this loyal loan, the amount of which ſhould have been indefinite, extending to any ſum the people choſe to ſubſcribe, making a

depoſit of ten *per cent.*; if it had been enacted that every future payment ſhould be made by call of that committee, on due notice given, to all the ſubſcribers, in proportion to the wants of the ſtate; if he had at the ſame time provided himſelf with the power of aiding thoſe ſubſcribers, in caſes of ſlack circulation of money, by the temporary loan of exchequer bills; he would not only have poſſeſſed the purſes, but the hearts of every wealthy friend to his country; the ſubſcribers would have been mutually pledged, to ſupport each other; the chain would have been continuous from north to ſouth, from eaſt to weſt, and, by properly cheriſhing that enthuſiaſtic ſpirit of loyalty, which in one powerful burſt appeared burning with deſire to ſpread its influence over the face of the whole iſland, the ſum ſubſcribed would have been beyond idea; a ſum that would have been certainly ſubſtantiated, and, by a little occaſional aſſiſtance, transferred from paper to ſpecie; a ſum that would have enabled him, at a future day, progreſſively, and warily to purchaſe, into the hands of government, a conſiderable part of the funded debt, on much better terms than I fear it can now be done.

In few words, the action and re-action, caused by the quick circulation of this subscription, would have materially benefited the country; it would have tied man to man, and, by its various ramifications in different directions, would have united together one mass of interest, affording ample security to our internal state, and rendering the name of British patriotism terrific both to intestine traitors, and to external foes.

The alarm of invasion intentionally propagated with an industrious assiduity by our enemies, may probably not be altogether without foundation: there are reasons which induce us to believe the reality of the threat, but there are a great number also which forbid us to fear any evil consequence resulting to the nation from so rash, so ridiculous an attempt. There can be little doubt but that the army of France has long been an object of terror to those who call themselves its rulers. That banditti, which has spread desolation and terror over half Europe, can never submit to sink into the inoffensive state of peaceful subjects. We may add also to this consideration, that of the numbers who compose that army one-fourth

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at leaſt are ſuſpected characters; royaliſts, perſons from the Vendee and other countries, who, till reſiſtance became vain, had honeſty enough to eſpouſe the cauſe of their king, and are now reluctantly compelled to earn their bread under his murderers, becauſe they have this only alternative, fight for us or be guillotined.

Theſe perſons at leaſt, if not a ſtill greater proportion of their army, the French directory wiſh to get rid of on any terms. Exhauſted as their finances are they are compelled at no ſmall expence to put theſe miſerable men in the line of conqueſt or deſtruction. The firſt they undoubtedly would prefer, but they as undoubtedly would ſend them to the latter, though their fate was, before their embarkation, reduced to the moſt abſolute certainty, rather than not avail themſelves of ſo patriotic an opportunity of diſpoſing of thoſe who, while exiſting in the bowels of France, they muſt always live in fear of. If, as a miraculous and providential ſcourge, commiſſioned by Heaven for the puniſhment of Britons, they obtain the ſmalleſt advantage, all may go well, they may be hailed as conquerors; if, as without ſome præternatural interference we

may

may fairly expect, they ſhould return to France in numbers ſcarce ſufficient to tell the tale of their diſcomfiture, the axe of the guillotine may readily diſpatch the miſerable remnant, and the cries of murder will be drowned in the louder vociferations of *vive la nation*.

For the foregoing reaſon an invaſion is certainly to be expected, but for no other: though enthuſiaſm, frenzy, madneſs, may particularly at the preſent time, be the leading characteriſtic of a French patriot, yet ſtill, in his cooler moments, he certainly cannot be ſuppoſed to poſſeſs them in ſo violent a degree, that he would thruſt his hand into a cauldron of blazing pitch, merely in the hope of perſuading the world that fire would have no effect on the fleſh of a Frenchman. The directory might amuſe their people with the the threat, but they certainly never would, for any other reaſon than what has been juſt ſtated, attempt to carry it into execution.

Political cauſes urging them, through neceſſity, to this raſh undertaking, let us ſuppoſe them eſcaped from our victorious and all-powerful fleets; let us ſuppoſe them at anchor on our coaſts; let us figure to ourſelves that

that they are actually diſembarked, together with their proper train of artillery and camp equipage; ſtill, if we behave like men, there is not the ſmalleſt reaſon to doubt their complete deſtruction. Britain is certainly capable of raiſing, on ſo preſſing an emergency as the preſervation of its conſtitution, its property, its religion, its liberty, an army of eight hundred thouſand fighting men: nay, I ſhould be ſanguine enough even to hope, that if the ardour which at preſent appears ready to burſt forth, attains that height, and ſpreads to the extent which all men who are not traitors to their country muſt wiſh it ſhould, the number under arms, and in the habit of learning the diſcipline and duty of ſoldiers, will in a very few weeks, including the regular troops and the militia, be little ſhort of what I have above ſtated.

The foes to your internal peace, my Countrymen, thoſe enemies to that eaſe and tranquillity of mind which the conſciouſneſs of a power capable of reſiſting and overcoming difficulties naturally inſpires, may, perhaps, endeavour to alarm the aged, the helpleſs, and the credulous, by repreſenting theſe

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new levies as little capable of reſiſting the mighty conquerors of Germany, Holland, Italy, and *Switzerland*; they will, perhaps, tell you that it requires two complete years to form a perfect foot ſoldier; and, for the cavalry, the time is almoſt beyond calculation. Credit not a ſyllable of theſe ridiculous ill-founded aſſertions. A Martinet may certainly conſume twelve months in teaching his men to turn their toes out, or to march gracefully; ſo may Monſ. Gallet require ſeven years to inſtruct a lady of faſhion in the art of dancing a minuet, and yet one of our own common country maſters may, in his way, convey the ſame quantum of inſtruction to the daughter of the village ſquire in as many days. Theſe points of diſcipline, as they are facetiouſly called, may really be requiſite in time of peace, were they of no other uſe than that of keeping both officers and men out of miſchief. The ſoldiers cut a fine figure on the parade; at a review they pleaſe the admiring populace, and ſerve to convince them that pay is not wholly given them for nothing; that the life of a military man is not merely a perfect round of idleneſs and diſſipation; but they contribute not

in the ſmalleſt degree to the perfection of a ſoldier, who is required only for ſervice againſt the enemies of his country. The eſſential points to be attended to in the field are, firſt, the uſe of the muſquet, ſo that each man ſhall be able coolly to load and diſcharge, in a narrow ſpace, without creating hurry in his own mind or actions, and without inconveniencing thoſe who ſtand next him. The next thing to be attended to is, the habit of loading and diſcharging with as much dexterity and quickneſs as poſſible without falling into confuſion, or expending ammunition heedleſsly, and without proper effect. The third, and only remaining abſolutely eſſential point is that degree of ſteadineſs and firmneſs which enables a body of men to reſiſt and repel a charge, as well as to be able to make one themſelves, mingling a due portion of ſpirit with cool determined reſolution, and vigour. The inferior and ſubordinate points are attention to command, the practice of advancing rapidly, retreating coolly, and reforming, if broken, ſo as to be quickly in a condition to renew attack, or, at leaſt, prevent the enemy from making any very ſerious impreſſion.

I think

I think I ſhall not incur much hazard of being contradicted, when I aſſert that theſe various indiſpenſible points of military duty may be acquired, and in no ſmall degree of progreſs towards perfection, in one month; nay, by perſons who were previouſly totally unacquainted with the ſcience and profeſſion. The face of this country is, perhaps, of all others in the univerſe, the beſt adapted to the advantage of troops roughly diſciplined. Permit me, my Countrymen, in this place, to requeſt particularly of thoſe among you who, from your ſituation, your popularity, or what is called rank in life, are likely to command or adviſe the equipment of aſſociated corps, to beware of plunging too far into a particular branch of military mania, which appears at this time to have ſeized particularly thoſe who are affluent—the formation and equipment of corps deſigned wholly to ſerve on horſeback. The incloſed ſtate of ſome extenſive diſtricts, and the unequal face of others, render mere horſe, in many inſtances, totally uſeleſs: but aſſociations adopting dragoon equipment * might render themſelves

* Not too light.

highly uſeful in all quarters alike. But to return to the more immediate cauſe of this part of the addreſs. In the more level, and, conſequently beſt cultivated parts of the country, almoſt every field preſents itſelf as a redoubt ready made, into which the defending troops may throw themſelves, and from many of which, on account of the depth of the ditches and ſtrength of the embankments, they could not be forced, without compelling the aſſailants to a conſiderable expence both of men and time *.

In the wilder and more mountainous parts impediments of a very different nature ariſe, and, perhaps, ſtill more inſuperable: the cannon, the wheel-carriages belonging to the army, and without which it cannot advance, will not attempt to aſcend the declivities, except by the ordinary roads: theſe are, by diligence and ingenuity, frequently capable of being ſo ruined in a night's

* Even when forced, they might file off at a right angle, or nearly ſo, along a bank which completely covers them, till, at the diſtance of an hundred yards or leſs, a freſh bulwark preſents its breaſt for their ſupport and protection, and where the enemy muſt be compelled to a renewal of their former labour.

time as to require the labour of three days to put them in their original, or even a paſſable ſtate for a mile in length. In many inſtances no chance of penetrating is afforded to the enemy, except that of forcing a paſſage through a narrow paſs, ſeveral miles perhaps in length. Here, as in the ſtreights of Thermopylæ the Spartans did of old, four hundred determined Britons might ſucceſsfully defend the natural barrier to their invaders, till the carcaſſes of the greater part of the aſſailants became a rampart againſt the vain attacks of the blood-thirſty ſurvivors. In ſhort, every dyke becomes a ſpot, on which, in caſe the frantic foe ſhould be raſh enough to carry into execution their deſperate attempt, the ſtandard of Britiſh liberty may be planted: every hill preſents itſelf as a natural citadel, from whence it may flout defiance and hurl ſecure deſtruction on its ſavage and deteſted enemies.

It is not impoſſible but that there may be ſtill remaining among us ſome miſcreants unprincipled enough to attempt the check of that generous ardour which appears on the preſent occaſion to have almoſt univerſally annihilated that bane of national welfare,

fare, party diſputes: they may endeavour to impreſs you with an idea, that, by aſſociating as the voluntary defenders of your own property, you render yourſelves liable to thoſe inconveniencies, which many perſons, and with ſome reaſon, ſuppoſe are to be encountered in a military life: that you voluntarily, and by your own act, ſubject yourſelves to a compulſive continuance in it long as thoſe who are affectedly and ſeditiouſly called your rulers, ſhall think proper to inſiſt. The aſſertion is ridiculous, infamous, and untrue: conſign the fabricators of it to that contempt and deteſtation they ſo juſtly deſerve. But though the written law of your country has no power over you; freedom and patriotiſm may, and ought to have. The ſervice you are aſked, and requeſted to afford is—the protection of your families, your property, and yourſelves: the greater part of you have wives or children, who, I charitably hope, are dear to you; few, or none of us but poſſeſs ſome property, which, ſmall as it may be, is our all; and we ſhould act baſely towards our country and ourſelves, were we timidly to abandon it to the torch of the mercileſs enemy.—I now

talk

talk to you on an awful ſubject, and I wiſh to engage your ſerious unprejudiced attention. It may be inconvenient, it may be uncomfortable to riſe from a warm bed in a cold winter's night, to aſſiſt our neighbour whoſe houſe may be on fire:—Who is there, ſhould he refuſe to aſſiſt on ſuch an occaſion, but would juſtly merit the execration of the whole village or hamlet, of whoſe inhabitants he forms ſo unworthy a part? Would he not be abandoned to contempt by all who witneſſed his conduct? Would he not be expoſed to an internal torture—that of his own reflection? He has acted unlike a man; and were he to ſuſtain no other, the culprit will find the puniſhment naturally attached to the crime as much as he can bear.

In few words, it is our part to act towards others not as we wiſh (for I will put it ſtill ſtronger to you) but as we may *require* they ſhould act towards us: it is a mutual duty incumbent on us all, to defend each other. Should the neceſſities, the danger of our country, require ſuch an exertion, who is there that would not deſerve the name of traitor to his fellow-countrymen, did he not patiently traverſe from one end of the iſland

to

to the other, if ſuch a journey would contribute to their relief? All this, however, muſt be voluntary; nor exiſts there a power in this country that can compel any man to do it without his own perfect conſent. We may hope, however, that, if required, the hardy highlander and inhabitant of the north may mingle his efforts joyfully with thoſe of the ſouth; that one connected patriotiſm may fire all boſoms; and the only diſpute remaining be, who ſhall moſt eagerly deſtroy the enemies of his country.

As to the taxes, thoſe burthens, under which, in order to dull your honeſt zeal, there are not wanting thoſe who would fain perſuade you that you labour, I ſhall beg to remark to you allegorically, that though the mechaniſm of your government is, perhaps, the moſt perfect in the univerſe, the ſmalleſt irregularity in any of its wheels may throw the whole ſtructure into confuſion. A mote, or hair, either wilfully or accidentally introduced into the moſt perfect watch ever conſtructed, will cauſe that ingenious piece of mechaniſm to move with much unſteadineſs and uncertainty: the hand of the maſter is, nevertheleſs, very conſpicuous

in

in the formation itſelf; and the obſtacle being eaſily removed by the hand of a ſkilful artiſt, the wonderful machine performs the duty and ſervice originally aſſigned to it with ability and advantage to the owner, becauſe, though perhaps long worn, it ſtill continues to preſerve a due and ſcrupulous exactneſs in its functions.

In ſhort, my Countrymen, the queſtion which is before you is ſimple, the alternative obvious. Will you baſely become the ſlaves of theſe tyrant French, or will you prove yourſelves in no degree degenerated from that noble ſtock, who did, by their hardy proweſs, acquire the never-to-be-forgotten victories of Creſſy, Poictiers, and Agincourt; victories which have rendered the very name of England terrible to France; a proweſs which has in every after age cauſed the pride, the inſatiable ambition of an envious rival to crouch beneath the fury of that uplifted arm of vengeance, which could have cruſhed but which nobly diſdained it?—Were your guardian genius to deſcend, he would addreſs you in ſomething like the following terms:

Britons! it has for ages been the cuſtom of your forefathers to dictate to their foes; will you now ſuffer thoſe verdant laurels which have deſcended to you as a birthright, to wither and fade in your hands? It cannot be; and that man is a traitor to his country who ſuſpects you of ſuch baſeneſs. There are ſome among you who affect to complain of grievances, who appear mad enough to imagine the bleſſings of liberty neceſſarily follow the enthuſiaſtic and cabaliſtical repetition of the word itſelf. This certainly ſeems the only enjoyment, if it can afford any, of which the miſerable, the infatuated banditti of France have, for years, ſuppoſed themſelves partaking; A Britiſh conſtitution, is not to be ſuſtained by ſuch viſionary fare; the plain ſubſtantial food of real freedom, which it has long fed on, is better adapted to its ſupport, and more conducive to its health. Need I remind you that you have before your eyes the ſad, the dreadful effects which their fatal, their abominable *friendſhip* has produced in every country of Europe, which has been timid enough, ſimple enough, or mad enough to put truſt in it for a moment.

But

But if you are ſtill ſenſeleſs enough to credit their profeſſions, ſtill blind enough not to diſcover their hypocriſy, or ſtill frantic enough to ſuppoſe a ſyſtem of plunder, of devaſtation, of maſſacre—an aſſemblage and combination of every vice that can deform human nature—forms the code of natural liberty, or can render you acceptable in the eyes of that ſupreme Being to whom we muſt hope you look up for protection, ſtill will I demand your pauſe.——Will YOUR pride ſuffer you to become lawleſs, vicious and barbarous, through fear, or compulſion? Will you permit your country to be laid waſte, your wives and children to be violated before your faces? Theſe, with many other horrors which I will not ſhock humanity by the recital of, are the indiſpenſible preliminaries to French fraternization!

Some of you are ſtill old enough to remember, and thoſe who are not, may have read the account of the ſpirit with which you on former occaſions ſpurned the inſidious interference of France, when ſhe offered it, and certainly with better colour than in the inſtance now before you. You vigorouſly repelled the attempt, you

gloriouſly puniſhed that inſolence which would have intruded and forced on you as a king him whom many were in their hearts weak enough to admire and love. Too late did that unhappy victim to French policy find that the pride of Britain had taken the alarm; that the juſt ſpirit of the country ſpread like a contagious peſtilence againſt his hopes; and that no apparent poſſibility remained of his ever being able to regain the ſeat of thoſe he called his anceſtors, while the people of Britain willed it ſhould not be ſo.

Examine what were the reſources of defence the nation then poſſeſſed, and compare them with thoſe of the preſent day, and confidence will reſume its place in your hearts, and thoſe who have been terrified will be aſhamed of their folly. Think not, however, as I have before remarked, that the deſperate tyrants of France will ſuffer ſo great an opportunity of ſacrificing thoſe of their preſent ſubjects, who have long been objects of terror, to paſs by neglected. Expect them daily, nightly, hourly; be ready to receive, to repel them. Sooner ſhould it be the wiſh of every honeſt Britain, that the carcaſſes of himſelf, and his countrymen, falling

with their ſwords in their hands in defence of their real liberty, ſhould putrify the air, and ſweep, by inglorious diſeaſe, from the ſurface of the earth theſe unprincipled foes to Britain, than by ignominious peace ſuffer them, while one ſhall remain alive, to continue as a ſcourge to it. Such, however, is not your deſperate ſtate, nor need you entertain the ſmalleſt fear but that the conflict will end in the perfect re-eſtabliſhment of your peace, and the undiſturbed enjoyment of the bleſſings of liberty. Bleſs then and pay your thanks devoutly to that ſupreme being who hath not only given you the means of repelling your enemies, but courage to uſe thoſe means as you ought. Crown ſuch gifts, and render them effectual to your preſervation, by adding, what is in your own power, *unanimity*.

Thoſe who may unhappily fall in this neceſſary, and glorious conteſt will die with the happy reflection of having fulfilled their duty, of having paid a patriotic debt when demanded of them, and freed their country from foreign tyranny. Their laſt wiſh will be, that their remains might be collected into one maſs, and interred on the higheſt promontory

tory oppoſite to France, that their indignant ghoſts might be permitted to frown unremittingly on that ſhore from whence their murderers iſſued forth: and that thoſe who may in every future age inhabit that wretched country, may ſay to their children, BEHOLD THAT MONUMENT OF OUR NATION'S BARBARISM AND FOLLY; ON THAT SPOT ARE ENTOMBED THOSE BRITONS WHO FELL IN DEFENCE OF THEIR LIBERTIES, WHO BY THEIR DEATHS GLORIOUSLY PRESERVED THEM TO THEIR POSTERITY. MAY YOU, OUR CHILDREN, WEEPING AS WE DO, OVER THE ASHES OF THOSE OF OUR WRETCHED FOREFATHERS WHO JUSTLY FELL IN THE TREMENDOUS CONFLICT, PROFIT BY THE EXAMPLE, AND WHENEVER YOU THINK IT NECESSARY TO CONTEND FOR YOUR OWN FREEDOM, BE CAUTIOUS NOT TO INTERFERE WITH THAT OF OTHERS.

PERRY-HILL,
May 7, 1798.

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